

American Fur Company invoices, 1821-22 /

AMERICAN FUR COMPANY INVOICES—1821–22.

BY THE EDITOR.

About the year 1855, the effects of the American Fur Company at Mackinaw were transferred to Ronald McLeod, he purchasing the company's warehouse and office building. The latter structure is now (1888) in use as a summer hotel; the warehouse "is but little used or quite deserted at times." In 1863, several large packing boxes, filled with the company's books and papers, were opened by the holders of the real estate and "the contents variously used—for lighting fires and placing around cabbage plants when put in the ground, to protect them from the cut-worm." Mrs. B. F. Felix, a Chicago lady, with antiquarian tastes, saved several volumes from the hands of the vandals and presented them to the Chicago Historical Society. In 1870, Mrs. Felix was again in Mackinaw and discovered that in the pantry of the McLeod home there were still left some volumes of accounts and letters," the leaves of which were being used to line cake-tins with." She again rescued several volumes, presenting all but three to the Chicago Historical Society. In the great fire of 1871, the Society's collections were largely destroyed, and these books of the American Fur Company with them. The only volumes now known to remain, of the lot first unboxed in 1863, are one volume of invoices in the possession of Mrs. Felix and two volumes of letters which are in the hands of a friend of that lady.¹

¹ Mrs. Felix is my authority for the above statements. She was of the opinion that volumes were in the library of the Western Reserve Historical Society, at Cleveland, Ohio, placed there by the late Alfred T. Goodman, secretary of that Society, but I am informed that none are now to be found in its archives.

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The volume of invoices marked:—" *Invoices Outward, A. F. Co. B.* ."—was kindly loaned to me in October, 1887, by Mrs. Felix. It contains the outward invoices of the company 371 from Michilimackinac (Mackinaw) during the years 1821 and 1822, and is chiefly interesting because giving the names and location of the traders having connection with the company, together with the nature of their relationship to the concern. It lacks the first twenty-six pages, but is otherwise in good condition. The accounts are, for the most part, kept in both English and American currency, and with great neatness and exactness. Although the transactions recorded did not all affect Wisconsin traders, it is deemed advisable to present the entire list of trading posts referred to in the volume, with the names and locations of the traders, and classified as to their connection with the company. A sample invoice is also presented, as showing the character of goods then entering into the Indian trade of the Northwest, and the prices extant. The orthography is that of the MS. volume.¹

¹ For a statement relative to the condition of the Indian trade west of Lake Michigan, in 1831, prices of goods and location of traders, consult *Senate Docs.*, No. 90, 22d Cong., 1st sess., pp. 49, 50.

LIST OF TRADERS.

JOINT ACCOUNT WITH THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY.

Russel Farnham, for the trade of the Lower Mississippi and its dependencies.
Michilimackinac, 10 August, 1821.

Joseph C. Dechereau, for the trade of Penatangonshire² & its dependencies: Lake Huron Outfit, 1820, transferred to ac. of Decheneau Outfit, 1821; for account of American Fur Company & Joseph C. Decheneau, 1 Aug. 1822.

² Penetanguishene, Ontario.— Ed.

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Decheneau's Outfit, 1821. Sundry goods delivered at Michilimackinac at different times and forwarded to Drummond Island. 1 Aug., 1822.

Decheneau's Outfit, 1821. Merchandise delivered by Wm. W. Matthews at Drummond Island, to Joseph C. Decheneau, for trade at Penatangonshire. 1 August, 1822.

Lake Huron Outfit, 1821. Merchandise delivered by Joseph C. Decheneau to Etienne Lamorandiere at Drummond 372 Island, being a part of purchase from Mr. Joseph Rolette at Drummond Island. July 21, 1821.

Joseph La Perche and Russell Farnham, for trade of the Lower Mississippi and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, July 27, 1822.

Louis Buisson. Merchandise for Illinois Outfit 1822. Account and risk of American Fur Company & Louis Pensonneau, Sen r . Michilimackinac, August 8, 1822.

ON THEIR OWN ACCOUNT AND RISK.

Michael Cadotte, sen r ,1 for his trade at La Pointe, Lake Superior. Michilimackinac, 23 July, 1821.

1 Michael Cadotte's trading post was at La Pointe, on the southwest shore of what is now called Madeline island, in the Apostles group, off Chequamegon bay. In 1820, he was visited by Henry R. Schoolcraft.—(*Exped. to Sources of Miss. River*, Phila., 1855, p. 105.) Cadotte then had his abode with the Chippewa band under chief Bezhike. Schoolcraft, in his curiously distorted map of the Apostles archipelago, calls it the “Federation group,” and gives the name of “Virginia island” to the Madeline of to-day; the other islands are assigned to Indiana, Missouri, Delaware, Ohio, Texas, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Minnesota, Illinois, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Carolina, California, South Carolina, New York, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Oregon, Rhode Island, Kentucky, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine,—

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naming them northward from Chequamegon bay, which is called “Bay of St. Charles” on Schoolcraft's chart. In July, 1826, Thomas L McKenney visited Cadotte's post.—(*Tour to the Lakes*, Baltimore, 1827, pp. 261–265.) McKenney calls the island “Michael's,” probably in recognition of the trader's Christian name, and says Cadotte had “lived here twenty-five years,” and was the owner of a comfortable little farm. In *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, v., p. 324, Cadette is said to have “early founded a settlement at La Pointe, and educated his sons at Montreal.” Joseph Cadott, probably one of the sons, is mentioned (*Id.*, x., 142) as being a lieutenant in the British Indian department, during the war of 1812–15. It appears (*Id.*, viii., p. 224) that Madeline island has at various times been known as Monegoinaic cauning, Woodpecker, Montreal, Middle and Cadotte's.— Ed.

Joseph Laperche, alias St. Jean, for his trade on the Lower Mississippi. Michilimackinac, 30 July, 1821.

Joseph Bailly, for trade on Lake Michigan, &c. Michilimackinac, 10 August, 1821.

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Joseph Guerette, for trade on Illinois River. Michilimackinac, 18 August, 1821.

Messrs. Binette, Buisson & Bibeau, for trade on the Illinois River and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 18 August, 1821.

Therese Schindler, for her trade at & about Michilimackinac. Michilimackinac, 23 August, 1821.

Augustin Grignon & John Lawe, for account and risk of themselves & Jacques Porlier, Sen r Pierre Grignon & Louis Grignon, all of Green Bay, for their trade there, &c. Michilimackinac, 3 September, 1821.

Antoine Deschamps, for the trade of Masquigon.¹ Michillmackinac, 11 September, 1821.

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1 Muskegon, Mich,— Ed.

Rolette, Joseph. Merchandize forwarded by Ramsey Crooks, Agent of American Fur company, from New York to Prairie du Chien N. Y. 29 th Jan y 1822.

Joseph C. Deschenaux. Merchandise forwarded by Chapantier. At Penatangonshire, November 7 th 1822.

Joseph Rolette. Merchandise delivered Laurent Rolette. Michilimackinac, 15 August, 1821.

Joseph Rolette. Michilimackinac, 15 August, 1821.

Richard M. Prior. Goods sold & delivered by William W. Matthews, at Drummond Island. Michilimackinac, 5 September, 1821.

Joseph Rolette. Merchandise delivered Laurent Rolette. Michilimackinac, Aug t 9, 1822.

R. M. Prior. Sundry merchandise taken by R. M. Prior out of those left last summer (1821) by W. W. Matthews. Michilimackinac, August 10, 1822.

Mrs. Framboise.² Sundry merchandise, from her inventory

² Madame Madeline la Framboise was a half-breed Ottawa woman, whom her husband, Francis,—a brother of Alexander la Framboise, who had a trading post at Milwaukee as early as 1785—had taught to read and write. He was killed, writes Mrs. E. T. Baird, of Green Bay, in the winter of 1809–10, at his trading wigwam near the present site of Grand Haven, Michigan,—an Indian shooting him dead while on his knees at prayer. Other accounts are to the effect that he was killed by Winnebagoes, while trading on the upper Wisconsin. His wife successfully prosecuted the far trade after his death. She was of tall, commanding form, agreeable manners and excellent deportment; and highly esteemed by both whites and Indians. She was for many years in the company's employ and “accustomed to visit the various trading posts, looking after the doings of clerks and

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employés.” Her chief station, as agent of the American Fur company, was at the site of Grand Rapids, Michigan, where she erected trading hut, the first building in Kent county, and was on very friendly terms with the Ottawas and Ojibwas. She was, on account of her great age, superseded as agent for the company by Rix Robinson, in 1821. In 1876, traces of the La Framboise cabin were yet visible, being treasured by the people of Grand Rapids as the oldest historic relics in their midst. In the summer of 1817, at Mackinaw, her daughter Josette, a singularly beautiful girl, became the wife of Lieut. John S. Pierce, U. S. A., brother of President Pierce. Mrs. J. S. Pierce died in 1821. The late Col. G. S. Hubbard, of Chicago, declared Madame la Framboise to be “a woman of extraordinary ability.”— Ed.

374 of Grand River Outfit, 1821, and delivered to her during the summer of 1822, for ac. of Rix Robinson. Michilimackinac, August 28, 1822.

Jean Bt. Beaubien,¹ for his trade at Milliwakie. Michilimackinac, August 14, 1822.

¹ The late Col. J. B. Beaubien, of Chicago, who had a trading post at Milwaukee as early as 1800.— Ed.

Daniel Dingley, for the trade of Folleavoine,² South Lake Superior, 1822 & 3. Michilimackinac, July 30, 1822.

² Rice lake (?)— Ed.

Joseph Rolette. Michilimackinac, August 9, 1822.

Edward Biddle. Michilimackinac, August 15, 1822.

Joseph C. Descheneaux. Michilimackinac, June 28, 1822.

Ignace Pichet. [Michilimackinac] June 28, 1822.

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Rix Robinson, for his trade on Lake Michigan.³ Michilimackinac, August 23, 1822.

³ At Ada, Michigan, near Grand Rapids. Robinson had studied law in New York state, but came west to enter the fur trade. He was a remarkably powerful athlete.— Ed.

Rix Robinson. Merchandise delivered William Fairnsworth. Michilimackinac, August 3 d 1822.

Michel Cadotte, Sen r . Merchandise delivered in charge of William Morison.⁴ Michilimackinac, July 23, 1822.

⁴ The company's agent at L'Anse, Mich. He visited Itasca lake, the source of the Mississippi, in 1804.— (Neill's *Hist. Minnesota*, ed. 1882, pp. 875, 876.)— Ed.

William A. Aitkin, for his trade at Fond du Lac,⁵ and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, July 24, 1822.

⁵ Of Lake Superior.— Ed.

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Eliza and William Mitchell. Michilimackinac, August 12, 1822.

Jean Bt. Beaubien and James Kinzie.¹ Michilimackinac, August 14, 1822.

¹ A half-brother of John H. Kinzie, a famous Chicago pioneer.— Ed.

Pierre Grignon & John Lawe, & Jacques Porlier, Sen r , Augustin Grignon & Louis Grignon, all of Green Bay, for their trade there, &c. Michilimackinac, August 23, 1822.

Pierre & Augustin Grignon. Michilimackinac, 23 d August, 1822.

Joseph Bailly. Michilimackinac, August 28, 1822.

Pierre Caune. Michilimackinac, August 31, 1822.

Therese Schindler. Michilimackinac, Sept r 8, 1822.

FOR ACCOUNT OF THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY.

Davis, John Henry. For the trade of the Upper Wabash and its dependencies.
Michilimackinac, 21 August, 1821.

James Kinzie,² for the trade of Milliwaki and its dependencies. Shipped per Schooner Ann, Cap t'n Ransom, from Michilimackinac to Chicago. Michilimackinac, 13 September, 1821.

² See *ante*, p. 224, note 2.— Ed.

Richard M. Prior. Goods delivered by William W. Matthews at Drummond Island, August 10, 1821.

FOR ACCOUNT AND RISK OF THE AMERICAN, FUR COMPANY.

Josette Gauthier, for the trade of Lake Superior. Michilimackinac, 23 July, 1821.

John F. Hogle and others, for the trade of Lac du Flambeau³ and its dependencies.
Michilimackinac 21 July, 1821.

³ In Lincoln county, Wisconsin, James D. Dory reported to Governor Cass, September 27, 1820, that "In Lake du Flambeau the Southwest Company have an establishment of five traders and twenty hands, the return from which last season was about fifty packs.—(*Wis. Hist. Colls.*, vii., p. 203.)— Ed.

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Jean B t Corbin, for the trade of Lac Courtoreille¹ and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 31 July, 1821.

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1 In Chippewa county, Wis.— Ed.

Eustache Roussain, for the trade of Folleavoine and its dependencies. 31 July, 1821.

Goodrich Warner, for the trade of Ance Quirvinan² and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 2 August, 1831.

2 L'Anse, Michigan upper peninsular; sometimes written "L'Ansee Quiwy-we-nong."— Ed.

Joseph Rolette, for the trade of the Upper Mississippi and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 15 August, 1821.

William H. Wallace, for the trade of the Lower Wabash and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 22 August, 1821.

Joseph Bertrand, for the trade of St. Joseph's (of Lake Michigan) and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 22 August, 1821.

Jeremie Clairement, for the trade of Iroquois River and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 22 August, 1821.

Madeline Laframboise, for the trade of Grand River and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 3 September, 1821.

Joseph Rolette, for the trade of the Upper Mississippi and its dependencies. 1823.

Louis Personneau, Sen r , for Illinois River Outfit. Michilimackinac, Aug t 12, 1822.

Truman A. Warren,³ for the trade of Lac du Flambeau, and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, July 15, 1822.

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3)Warren, in 1832, was the chief trader at La Pointe, being the son-in-law of Michael Cadette.—(Neill's *Hist. Minnesota*, ed. 1882, p. 404.)— Ed.

William Morrison and others, for the trade of Fond du Lac and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, July 20, 1822.

Jean B t Corbin, for the trade of Lac Courtoreille and its dependencies. Michihmackinac, July 23, 1822.

John Holliday, for the trade of Ance Quirvinan and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, 26 July, 1822.

William H. Wallace, for the trade of the Lower Wabash and its dependencies. Mackinac, Aug t 6, 1822.

Jehu H. Davis, for the trade of the Upper WabaSh and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, August 7, 1822.

Joseph Bertrand & Pierre Navarre, for the trade of S t Josephs 377 and Kinkiki¹ and dependencies. Michilimackinac, Aug t 7, 1822.

¹ Kankakee river.— Ed.

Antoine Deschamps & Gurdon S. Hubbard, for the trade of the Iroquois River² and its dependencies. Michilimackinac, Aug t 9, 1822.

² A branch of the Kankakee.— Ed.

James Abbott, Detroit, pr. Schooner Tiger, Blake, for Detroit Outfit. Michilimackinac, Sept r 6, 1822.

W. W. Matthews. Goods to be sold in Montreal. Michilimackinac, Sept r 5, 1822.

A SAMPLE INVOICE.

Invoice of Merchandise for the Trade of Milliwaki and its dependencies. Shipped per Schooner Ann, Capt. Ransom, from Michilimackinac to Chicago, to address of James Kinzie, for ac. him & Am. Fur Company.

30 prs. Blankets, 3 point @\$8.10 \$243 00 71 " " 2½ " 6.10 433 10 25 " " 2 " 4.35 108 75
17 " " 2 " inferior 2.57 43 69 8 " " 1 " 3.20 25 60 9 ps. Broad cord 4 " Narrow " 13 ps. com.
Blue Strouds 36.60 475 80 1 " Scarlet cloth, 19 yds 2.60 49 40 1 " Blue " 22¾ yds 2.00
45 50 1 " " " 22¼ " 2.50 55 62 1 " " " 21¼ " 2.34 49 73 1 " " " 22½ " 2.60 58 50 1 " " " 16½
" 4.00 66 — 3 " Spotted Swanskin, 138 yds .50 69 — 3 " White Molton 3 " Blue " 6 ps
22.40 134 40 1 " Green Flannel 20 80 1 " Yellow " 26 — 3 " Domestic Cotton, 124 yds .31
88 44 2 " Furniture " 56 " .53 29 68 1 " " " 28 " .55 15 40 5 " Printed " 140 " .44 61 60 1 "
" " 28 " .52 14 56 12 " Indian Calico 12.00 144 — 2 " Gunahs 2.50 5 — ½ doz. Printed
Cotton Shawls, 6.40 3 20 7/12 " Cotton Flag Handkerchiefs 4.86 2 83 8/12 " Mock Madras
" 3.54 2 86 4/12 " 4/4 Black Silk " 10.25 3 42 8/12 " # " " 9.50 6 33 378 ½ ps. 14 Ingrain
Ribbon @\$7.40 \$3 70 1 " " Coloured " 6 60 1 " 9 Ingrain " 4 70 2 " " Coloured " 4.10 8 20
3 Rolls Taffety " No. 3 .87 2 61 1 gro. London Scots Gartering 6 40 1 " Scarlet & Striped
" 4 60 1 " Highland " 3 60 1 " Coloured " 3 40 2 doz, Country made Socks 4.00 8 — 1 "
Box Wood Combs 1 90 1 " " " " 3 80 1 " " " " 2 90 1 " Ivory Combs ea. 2.30 & 1.70 4 — 2
" Com. Horn Combs @ 57c, 1 doz. do. 40c 1 54 1 " Paper-Cased Looking Glasses 1 —
5 " Scalping Knives 1.70 8 50 15 " Cartouche " 1.40 21 — 6 " Brass Inlaid do 3.10 18 60 1
" Clasp " 1 70 1 " Womens Scissors ea. 1.37 & 2.27 3 64 ½ " Shop " ea. 1.92 & 2.14 2 03
2/12 " Double Bolt Pad Locks 43 86 ¼ " Sleigh Bells ea. 2.30 & 1.17 & ½ doz. do @3.88
3 29 1 Gro. Iron Jews Harps 1 60 1 " Plain Bath Rings, assorted 1 40 1 " Stone " " 1 80 ½
" Indian Awls 1.50 75 ½ " Plated Vest Bullet Buttons 1.50 75 1 C. Common Needles 38
100 Masses Mock Garnets .25 25 — 8 " Barley Corns .55 4 40 7 " Coloured Beads .60 4
20 1 " Cod Line, 24 threads 1 20 2 " All Coloured Thread 1.00 2 1 " Stitching " No. 60 1
40 6 " Ingrain Worsted 2.00 12 — 6 " Coloured " 1.50 9 — 30 Calico Shirts 1.93 57 90 ½
doz. English Playing Cards 6.00 3 — 1 Quire Foolscap Paper, Plain 45 1 " Quarto Post
" 50 1 Set Moons 9 — 3 " Extra Large Moons 6.00 18 — 3 Sets Pierced Broaches, No.
1 8.00 24 — 1 " " " 2 6 67 10 " Embossed" 1 size .64 6 40 10 " " " 2 " .51 5 10 10 " " " 3
" .38 3 80 2 C Large Common Broaches 4.27 8 54 2 C. Small common Broaches 2.67 5
34 78 Large Double crosses per C. 10.33 8 05 1 C. Small " " 7 67 2 prs. Arm Bands 3 in.
D. S. 5.78 11 56 4 " " " 2½ " 6.— 24 — 3 " " " 2 " 5.33½ 16 — 7 " Wrist " 1½ " 2.53 17 71
7 " " " 1¼ " 2.00 14 — 6 " " " 1 " 1.47 8 82 6 " Ear Wheels, 1 size 1.44 8 64 500 " Large

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Square Ear Bobs .14 70 — 379 1821 1500 prs. Large Round Ear Bobs @ .14 \$210 — 400 " Small " " " .11 44 — 12 lbs. Vermillion 1.40 16 80 10 Blanket Capots 4.67 46 70 6 lbs. Coffee .45 2 70 4 " Young Hyson Tea 1.75 7 30 112 " Beaver & Duck Shot .20 22 40 11800 ps. Black 8300 " White 20,100 Wampum 5.50 110 55 6 N. W. Guns 9.00 54 — 12 Corn Hoes 1.00 12 — 3 lbs. Oakum .25 — 75 2 gro. Pipes 3.00 6 — 24½ lbs. Covered Copper Kettles 1.00 24 50 60½ " Open Brass " 1 Nest 1.00 60 50 1 Nest, Tin Kettles (14 Eng.) 24 — 534 lb. Plug Tobacco. 6 Kegs .28 149 52 400 lb. Gun Powder, 8 kegs .62½ 250 — 53 " Gum 1 " .10 5 30 1 Barrel Salt 6 — 10 " Flour 5.00 50 — 76 Biscuit, 1 barrel 6 4 56 6 Double Bale cloths 1.50 9 — 1 pr. Blankets 2½ pt. damaged on Bale No. 5 2 30 8 Old Bale Cloths, Cords & Baling 1.00 8 — 3 boxes for sundries, ea. 38c, 50c, & 62c 1 50 1 Gun Box 1 25 8 Kegs for Powder 1.00 8 — 1 " for Gum — 38 1 Barrel for Biscuit — 25 1 pr. Cart Wheels. bot of Major Puthuff 16 85 1 N.Y. Hair Trunk deliv'd I. B. La Fortune 4 — 1 Tin Milk Strainer 75 4 Bread Bons .10 40 ½ doz Holland Twine 64 3 Packing Needles 5 15 \$3,920 48 Amount sundries delivered 23 July 1821 1,650 79 \$5,571 27

Errors excepted, Michilimackinac, 13 September, 1821.